

Q. # 1003

Letter from Craigie to Arita dated 15 June 1939

BRITISH EMBASSY  
TOKYO.  
15th June, 1939

Immediate

My dear Minister,

With reference to our conversation yesterday I am sorry to say that I have now received news from His Majesty's Consul-General at Tientsin indicating that the military restrictions now being imposed on communications with the British Concession are being applied in such a way as to constitute definite and grave anti-British discrimination. According to this report all British subjects are being held up for from one-half to one hour and rigorously searched on entering and leaving the Concession in the same manner as, and together with, all Chinese. Other foreigners are being allowed to pass without stoppage or examination. It further appears that some British subjects, including military in uniform, have been refused exit.

By no process of reasoning can such discrimination against British subjects be justified by the Japanese authorities on the plea either of self-defence or in connection with the case of the four Chinese which we discussed yesterday. I cannot believe that such action has the authority or even the approval of the Japanese Government and I must therefore ask Your Excellency to be good enough to arrange for instructions to be despatch to the proper Japanese authorities in Tientsin to ensure that every form of discrimination against British subjects is at once discontinued.

The matter being, as you will see, very urgent, I should be most grateful if Your Excellency would, if possible, let me have a reply to this letter today in order that I may give His Majesty's Government precise information as to the attitude of the Japanese Government in the matter.

Believe me,

my dear Minister

Yours very sincerely,

(signed) R. L. Craigie.

His Excellency  
Mr. Hachiro Arita,  
His Imperial Japanese Majesty's  
Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Letter from Craigie to Arita, dated 25 June 1939.

BRITISH EMBASSY  
TOKYO.  
June 25th, 1939

Your Excellency,

Under instructions from His Majesty's Governments in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, I have the honour to bring to Your Excellency's notice a case of gross indignity inflicted on the 23rd instant by agents of the Japanese Army upon Mr. Cecil Davis, honorary New Zealand Government agent at Tientsin. The facts of the case are set out in the enclosed memorandum and, in accordance with my instructions I desire to protest in the strongest possible manner against this insulting behaviour to an official of the New Zealand Government and a well-known and highly respected member of the British community. This act, following on numerous other cases which I brought to Your Excellency's attention on June 15th, 16th, 18th and 20th, leave no doubt as to the deliberate nature of the provocation now being offered by the local Japanese authorities. A further instance of similar inexcusable behaviour which has since come to my notice is shown in the second enclosure to this note.

2. In an interview with representatives of the press on the 21st instant the official Spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that he could state categorically that no indignities as reported were being inflicted on British subjects entering or leaving the blockaded British Municipal Area at Tientsin, and that no discrimination was being made against them. This statement is not in accordance with the facts disclosed in the accompanying documents.

3. Your Excellency has informed me that it is not the intention of the Japanese Government to discriminate against British subjects, to restrict their food supplies or to subject them to abuses and indignities. Nevertheless, these intolerable outrages continue and, as stated by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the Japanese Ambassador in London on the 23rd instant, are arousing great indignation in Great Britain. I have accordingly received instructions to request that Your Excellency will ensure that immediate steps are taken to put a stop to these acts and to provide that proper respect be given to the rights under which British subjects are entitled by treaty to live and trade peacefully in China.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

(Signed)

His Excellency  
Mr. Hachiro Arita  
His Imperial Japanese Majesty's  
Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Enclosure No. 1 in Note to Minister for Foreign Affairs No. 127

Mr. Cecil Davis, Chairman of the Tientsin Country Club and honorary Agent of the New Zealand Government when he attempted to pass the barriers on the night of June 23rd was told when he reached the inspection shed to take off his clothes. He demurred and stated if that were to be the proceeding he would not pass the barriers at all but would stay the night in the Concession. The inspecting officer promptly struck Davis on the face and told him he would have to go. At this stage three other Japanese who were abetting rouse up and Davis felt in the circumstances he had no alternative but to submit to whatever treatment was given him. He was then made to remove all his clothing except his briefs and spent fifteen minutes in full view of the passers-by including women, during which time his clothing et cetera were subjected to delatory examination. On leaving his passport was left on the ground.



Enclosure No. 2 in Note to Minister for Foreign Affairs No. 127

Substance of a Statement Regarding the Treatment of

Mr. Lord and Mr. House at the barrier at Tientsin.

1. Mr. House and Mr. Lord were placed on a straw mat in a hut in full view of all persons passing through, irrespective of sex or nationality. The Chinese police were detailed to search them whilst one Japanese soldier stood in front to watch. There were four other Japanese sitting around.
2. The Chinese police were considered by Japanese to be too inoffensive in their search so they were slapped in the face and the Japanese took charge. Mr. House and Mr. Lord were forced to remove all their clothing and pile it on the muddy floor and all articles were removed from their pockets and placed likewise on the floor. Mr. House was standing absolutely naked for at least five minutes. Mr. Lord still had briefs on which he was not obliged to remove, but he stood clothed in them alone for the best part of ten minutes.
3. Each article of clothing was inspected and thoroughly examined.
4. After examining the men's clothing the Japanese took their passports, which he had thrown on the floor, and ruffled the hair of both men. He made signs for Mr. Lord to open his mouth and being dissatisfied that it was sufficiently widely open he deliberately took Mr. Lord's passport and forced his mouth open with it. He then made both men stand with their legs apart and examined their crutches. This completed the search except that the Chinese police were made to take hold of Mr. Lord's ears and examine them.
6. The whole proceedings lasted approximately twenty to twenty-five minutes, during which time both men were in full view of the public and women were passing through the hut.

Enclosure No. 3 in Note to Minister for Foreign Affairs . No. 127

Tientsin: Interference with food supplies.

The Japanese military spokesman at Tientsin stated in an interview given to the press on the 19th June that the Japanese had no intention of stopping foodstuffs entering the Concession as such a prohibition would be most inhuman. In connexion with this statement the following facts were noted:-

1. The Japanese authorities have turned back boats bringing food up the river for the British Concession.
2. On the 19th June a "Domei" report from Tientsin stated that "three trucks loaded with fresh vegetables were admitted yesterday to the French Concession to ease the vegetable famine there". An arrangement was consequently made by the French authorities with the Japanese authorities that normal supplies should be brought into the French Concession by French Military lorries and the existence of this arrangement was confirmed by a "Domei" report appearing in Tientsin on the 23rd June. Both these reports of special arrangements with the French authorities are admissions that food supplies entering the British Concession are subject at least to interference and obstruction.
3. As a direct result of the Japanese measures perishable foodstuffs are very short in the British Concession. For example it is understood that on the 21st June 10 per cent of the usual quantities of vegetables were available in the Concessions, while no ice was available to the British market at all.

C E R T I F I C A T E

W.D.C. No. \_\_\_\_\_

I.P.S. No. 2383 AStatement of Source and Authenticity

I, HAYASHI Kaoru hereby certify  
that I am officially connected with the Japanese Government in the  
following capacity: Chief of the Archives Section, Japanese Foreign  
Office

and that as such official I have custody of the document hereto  
attached consisting of 8 pages, dated June, 1939, and described  
as follows: Proposal presented by the British Ambassador to Tokyo  
to Japanese Foreign Minister ARITA, on June 15, June 25, 1939.  
regarding the British Concession in Tientsin.

I further certify that the attached record and document is an  
official document of the Japanese Government, and that it is part  
of the official archives and files of the following named ministry  
or department (specifying also the file number or citation, if any,  
or any other official designation of the regular location of the  
document in the archives or files): \_\_\_\_\_

Foreign MinistrySigned at Tokyo on this23rd day of Sept. 1946/s/ K. Hayashi

Signature of Official

SEAL

Witness: /s/ Nagaharu OdoChief, Archives Section  
Official Capacity



C E R T I F I C A T E

Statement of Official Procurement

I, Richard H. Larsh, hereby certify  
that I am associated with the General Headquarters of the Supreme  
Commander for the Allied Powers, and that the above certification  
was obtained by me from the above signed official of the Japanese  
Government in the conduct of my official business.

Signed at Tokyo on this

25 day of Sept., 1946

/s/ Richard H. Larsh

Witness: /s/ T/4 Toguchi

Investigation Division I.P.S.  
Official Capacity